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## THE OLD HOUSE AT DUNKENFIELD.

### CHAPTER I.

DUNKENFIELD is a smallish place for houses, but the parish lies pretty wide, and there are some stiffish farms in it. I am not a farmer myself; I

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am only a working man, and have lived all my life in Dunkenfield. I was born in the parish, brought up in it, went to service in it, got married in it, have brought up a family in it, and expect to die in it. I have no wish to the contrary, I am sure;

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for our churchyard is a wonderful pretty place, and it seems sometimes—though that's all nonsense to be sure—but it does seem as if I couldn't rest my dead bones so quiet-like anywhere else.

Dunkenfield is not a very grand place, any way; nor a very bustling place. It lays in a flat sort of country, and away from any turnpike roads; so that we don't see much of the world and its goings on. Every one to his taste. I like it all the better for that; but my cousin Thomas, who lives in a great town a good many miles off, wonders how I can bear it.

The people of Dunkenfield are, most of them, working people. Setting aside the clergyman and his lady, we are all pretty much given to wearing smock frocks and nailed boots—the men part of us, that is; and the women part don't, in general, wear silk gowns and veils and kid gloves, nor yet carry parasols. We are none the worse for that, and none the better, perhaps; for I reckon there's often as much pride under fustian and plain cotton stuff as under broadcloth and silk. I expect that human nature is pretty much the same all the world over, and whether a man's rich or poor.

There are a few stout old farm-houses in Dunkenfield; but setting aside them and the parsonage, all the rest of the houses except one are cottages for poor people; and poor places enough they are, some of them. But there is one house, as I said, that is reckoned a grand sort of place; and 'tis about that house that my story is to be.

Not so much about the house, either, as about them that I have known to live in it. Not but what the house itself would be worth telling of, if people knew its history. A strange, thick-walled, rambling old place it is, with oaken floors and stairs, and carved work all about the walls and ceilings. Pleasant grounds there are round it, too. When I was a boy, I remember the garden—a part of it, at least—was full of yew trees, cut in queer shapes to look like men and women and peacocks, and other matters of that sort. But they were grubbed up long ago, and the garden is like other gardens now.

But the old house, as I was saying, has been inhabited by more families than one since I first knew it. The first that I remember anything about was an old gentleman and his housekeeper, and a gardener. That was all the family, and the house belonged to the gentleman himself. Captain Milbrook was his name. A strange old gentleman he was too. He had lived a longish time in foreign parts, it is likely, and had got ways about him that kept him pretty much at a distance from all the people round about. As to us village boys, it was a word and a blow with him, if ever any of us offended him; and the blow came first, the word afterwards. You may be sure that we always got out of his way whenever we saw him. We did not often see him though, nor did anybody else besides his two servants. He didn't get out in the daytime much; it was only at night that he was pretty sure to be abroad. As soon as dark set in, the captain used to put on an old cloak that reached down to his heels—a soldierly sort of cloak it was—and start off on his rambles. If the night was wet or stormy, so much the better for him; nothing could keep him in-doors at such times. Nobody knew why he had such a fancy for night-

walking, except that people did say the captain couldn't rest in bed quiet, a-thinking of the bloodshed he had witnessed, and in which he had had a share in his day. But I reckon that wasn't it. I fancy he was a little bit crazed, and no wonder, for after he was dead a dreadful mark of an old sword-cut was found on his head. The sword must have gone right through his skull the doctor said, and it seemed a wonder that he could have lived after it.

A terrible profane old man the captain was, and a very great miser. He grudged every little expense, as if he was going to be ruined outright by it; and it was little good he ever did to Dunkenfield. And yet he was monstrous rich, and had no kith nor kin that he cared for. But it is not always such that do most good in the world.

Well, there was neither sorrow nor joy when old Captain Milbrook died. But the people at Dunkenfield began to look out, and wonder who would live at the old house next. There was a great bustle in Dunkenfield only a few weeks after. Solomon tells us that "there's a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together." And it seemed as if the time for gathering stones together, and building them up, was come; for great alterations began to be made in the old house which, for twenty years or more, according to what was said, hadn't had so much as a new brick or tile upon it, though badly enough it wanted both. At any rate, the new people were not so fearful of spending money as old Captain Milbrook had been. It took some time to get the house in order, but it was done at last. Then came wagon-loads of furniture all the way from London, with servants to put it in place and take care of it. Soon afterwards, one fine summer's evening, a carriage, heavily laden with luggage, passed through Dunkenfield, and set down its passengers at the old house. The new family was come.

Mr. Milbrook—that was the name of the new gentleman, and he was the nearest of kin to the old captain, I fancy—wasn't known by any one at Dunkenfield; for he had been on no very good terms with the old captain, and hadn't been near the place in the captain's lifetime. He was a middle-aged gentleman, very stern and distant in his ways, and had always lived in London till the property came to him. People wondered what he could see in the old house at Dunkenfield to make it his home, especially as he wasn't known by any of the gentry round about. But he did come; and as he employed a good many people, and lived in good style—very different from the old captain—and spent his money pretty freely, the village people were glad of his coming. I was a biggish boy then, and I got into work at the old house as gardener's boy, and kept the place some years, so the change in the families at the old house did me good.

Mr. Milbrook was a studious sort of man, and wasn't often seen about the place; but his lady was a busy and good kind of woman, and got soon to be liked by the poor people of Dunkenfield. She was a sort of doctoring lady, and was fond, I fancy, of making up drinks and pills and plasters. Any way, she was always ready to give advice and medicines to them that thought they wanted them; and it was said that her physic sometimes did as

much good as the regular doctor's stuff. But, perhaps, it was the more nourishing food that used to go along with the physic. However that might be, the poor lady hadn't very good health herself; and, to my way of thinking then—and for the matter of that, I am pretty much of the same opinion now—she wasn't happy.

There were three young people in this family; but only two of them lived always at home, in the old house at Dunkenfield. One of these was a young lady, Mr. and Mrs. Milbrook's only daughter: she was about twelve years old, may be, when the family first came to the place. The other was a boy, three or four years younger—Master May Milbrook—and a fine, bright-eyed boy he was. I took a liking to him the first time I saw him, and so did others; and whenever I think of him I feel a sort of sadness like. But I shall tell that part of the story presently.

The other son—he was the oldest in the family—was kept pretty much at school for two or three years after Mr. Milbrook came to Dunkenfield; and after that he went to college—Oxford, I think they told me. He only came home in the holidays. Mr. Basil Milbrook was his name; and there's a story about him too, that I have a thought of telling.

The young lady, Miss Lucy; she was a dear young creature, so mild and gentle and loving! She wouldn't have harmed a worm, nor given a crooked word or dark look to any living thing. If the poor people round liked Mrs. Milbrook well enough, they doted on Miss Lucy when they came to know her, and would have done anything almost to serve her. Leastways, I know that I would have gone through fire and water for her, only just to have had one of her bright thankful looks and pleasant, loving words. Poor dear Miss Lucy! I think I see her now; not like what she was when I saw her last; but like when I first set eyes on her, as she played in and out in the shrubberies with her little brother May.

Though there was plenty of money, I don't think there was much real happiness in that family. Mr. Milbrook had a good deal of the old captain's temper in him. He would be minded; and, right or wrong, when he had set his mind on a thing, it must be done; nothing would turn him. Everybody that had to do with Mr. Milbrook somehow or other got to be afraid of him. The long and short of it is, he was a terrible tyrant over all his family. His own wife didn't dare oppose him in the slightest thing: I think she was more in dread of him than anybody else was; and, I take it, when a man, whether he be gentle or simple, as the saying is, carries it high, like *that*, over his wife, 'tis little domestic happiness there can be.

As to the servants, they knew who they must mind, and who they needn't. Not but what they were obliged to be civil to their mistress; but when it came to be said to them, as it was too often, "There's only one master in this family, and you are to obey my orders first, and your mistress's afterwards," there couldn't be much respect for her. I take it, she was looked upon only as a sort of upper servant; and to my way of thinking, the poor lady was worse off than her servants, for they had the liberty, which she hadn't, of leaving their places when they had a mind. And they had

a mind for that pretty regularly once a year, if not oftener. They were well fed, though, and well paid; but they couldn't stand the tight rein Mr. Milbrook kept on them.

I dare say Mr. Milbrook loved his children; I haven't a doubt but he did; but he never showed it—to anybody's knowledge that lived in his house, that is. Or if he did show it, it was in an uncommon sort of way; but then he had ways of his own that were not like everybody's ways. And maybe his children loved him; but it wasn't with a fearless sort of love, by any manner of means. 'Tis a bad sign, I think, when a father's going away from home for a few days, on business or what not, is looked forward to with joy and rejoicing by those who ought not only to reverence and obey him, but also to cling to him with love and affection. There! I've got children of my own; and I do think it would make me wretched to hear them say to one another, on the sly:—"Father's going away to-morrow; how happy we shall be while he's gone. I hope he won't come back again for a long, long time!" It would take away all my manhood, I know. And where there's that sort of feeling, I don't think it's altogether the poor children's fault. But there's a fault somewhere, that's certain.

Well, it was just so in Mr. Milbrook's family, at any rate. Bless their little hearts! I could always tell by their looks when they came to walk or to play in the garden grounds, whether Miss Lucy's and Master May's father was at home or abroad, let alone what I heard them say to one another. When he was at home, they were so startled and timid; they seemed as if they didn't dare speak above a whisper; and if they were at play a little, and saw their father coming, they would leave off directly and steal away as if they had been guilty of some shocking bad action. And if he came upon them unawares, he used to speak so stern and sharp and quick, it was enough to make one's heart ache to hear it. It wasn't often, though, that Miss Lucy was caught playing, except it was to please her brother May; for she was kept very strict to her books and studies of one sort or other under a governess; and the governess was sure to be called to task if Miss Lucy had too much liberty given her. So I was told by them that lived in the house. As to Master May, his father was his schoolmaster at that time, and a dreadful hard one, I reckon; and terribly the poor boy was punished, I know, for I have seen it, if he didn't learn as he ought. I expect it set him against books and learning for ever after.

But when Mr. Milbrook went away from home, as he used to do at times, then was the time for Master May to break loose: he wasn't like the same boy. And it was what happened at one of these times got him into sad trouble. I shall tell the story of it, as it was told to me at the time.

There was, in Mr. Milbrook's library, a curious machine for electrifying, I think they called it; it had a great round wheel made of glass, that used to turn with a handle, till it brought sparks out of people that touched it. I don't understand about it; but there it was. Well, one day, when Mr. Milbrook was away from home, Master May went into the library, all by himself, and hadn't been there many minutes before a great crash was heard

by the housemaid ; and she ran into the library to see what could be the matter. There stood poor little May, as white as a sheet ; and there was this machine, down on the ground, and the great glass wheel smashed into a hundred bits.

It doesn't matter, and if it did, I can't tell exactly what passed between Master May and Hester—that was the servant's name. But it came to this at last, that to save the poor boy from the dreadful flogging he would be sure to get from his father, Hester would take the blame on herself, and say that she threw down the machine in trying to dust it. This of course was very wrong ; but the first wrong was, to my way of thinking, in the boy being made so afraid of his father as to be driven, by his very dread, to fall in with such a wicked way of getting out of trouble. After all, Hester had to persuade poor little May a long time before he would consent to it ; and 'twas only because he hadn't a bit of hope that his father would forgive him, if he humbled himself ever so much, or begged and prayed ever so hard, that he gave in at last. As to his mother, poor May knew well enough that *she* had no power to help him or to save him from punishment.

You may think how terrified the boy was all the time after that till his father came home. As to Hester, she went about her work as usual. She was a stout-hearted sort of girl, and didn't mind hard words so much as some. "He won't flog me, any way, I reckon," she said to herself ; "and I don't like the house nor its ways, and may as well lose my place one way as another." And it is true enough, she did mean to leave ; so, according to her way of thinking then, it was all one whether she was turned away for an accident, or left of her own accord.

But Mr. Milbrook wasn't the sort of man to be deceived so easily ; and it did not end at all as Hester had laid out that it should. He staid from home longer than was expected ; but he returned at last, and hadn't been an hour in the house before all the servants were called into the library, where they found Mr. Milbrook with his lady, and Miss Lucy and Master May. I should say that nobody had been told, or knew anything about the accident but Hester and the poor little boy ; for the library was a room that Mrs. Milbrook scarcely ever thought of going into, and the servants had no business there.

By all accounts, Mr. Milbrook was half beside himself with anger ; and it wasn't long before he began to ask all round, who had done the mischief. Everybody denied any knowledge of it till it came to Hester ; and then, as boldly as she could, she said, yes, it was she who did it ; and went on to say that going into the room to draw down a blind, she saw that the machine was covered with dust : any way, she tried to make out a story about it that she thought her master would believe. But it wouldn't do. As generally happens in such cases, it didn't hold together well ; and one way or other, when questions were put to the girl, she contradicted herself ; so that not only Mr. Milbrook, but everybody else, thought that she had gone into the room for some dishonest purpose, and had thrown down the machine in trying to get at some drawers that it stood near, where her master kept different sorts of curiosities.

"Go and fetch the constable," Mr. Milbrook said, in his stern way, to the footman. At this turn in the affair the poor girl turned pale. She didn't fear that anything could be proved against her, but it is likely she dreaded losing her character.

Master May had been, all along, in a shiver like. He had said he didn't know anything about the accident, only that Hester had told him she had done it ; but he wasn't used to falsehood, and besides he didn't know how it might end. So as soon as his father said, "Go and fetch the constable," and when he saw Hester's pale face, he couldn't restrain himself any longer : he couldn't bear to think that another was to be sent to prison, perhaps, for what he had done. So he came forward, and out with all the truth.

What happened after this nobody ever seemed to have a right knowledge of. The poor boy had scarce finished his story, however, before there was a terrible shriek from him, and he fell to the ground, struck senseless by a dreadful heavy blow. The maid-servants shrieked too ; and the poor mother sank into a chair, and turned as pale as death. Little Lucy was the only one that showed any sense. She ran to her father, and laid hold on his arm, and looked him in the face bold and brave. "Papa," she said, "do you know what you are about ? Do you mean to kill my brother ?"

"No," he said ; and they that heard him said that he ground his teeth like a madman. "No, Lucy ; I won't kill him, though he deserves it—the *liar* ! But go to your room, Lucy ; it is not fit you should be here ; and take your mother with you, if she has sense enough to know what she is about."

But Lucy wouldn't go. "I must not go, papa," she said ; "and I will not leave this room till you promise me not to strike my poor brother again." And she stooped down and tried to raise him in her arms. But he was stunned, poor boy, and the blood was trickling down his face.

I expect that Mr. Milbrook was ashamed of his passion then, and he gave the promise.

But he didn't promise that the punishment should end there ; and it didn't. I don't know how long it was that Master May was shut up, and kept on bread and water ; but it was a longish time. But that wasn't the worst. When he was let go about again, it was with a card fastened on to him, bearing the word **LIA**, in great big staring letters, upon it. Nobody dared to take it off, nor yet to show pity to the poor boy. As to Hester, she was turned away at once, without a character ; but she soon got another place, for the story came to be known, and everybody was crying out against Mr. Milbrook. I suppose he mightn't have known of that ; but, if he had, he wouldn't have cared for what people said.

But poor May, from that time, wasn't the same boy. He felt the disgrace, and became hardened like. I don't believe he cared, after that, for anything his father did to him. At last he was sent to school, and everybody about was glad for the poor boy's sake that he was. We thought he would pluck up spirit again there. And so he did, maybe ; but not the right sort of spirit. He seemed, by all accounts, to have been made desperate, and didn't care what he did or what came to him.

Well, after three or four years he came home again, for the first time. He hadn't been allowed to come home for the holidays till then. His father's heart seemed to have been turned against him. Perhaps it wasn't. Mr. Milbrook might have thought he was doing for the best, and might have felt more than he liked to show. Any way that was part of the punishment for the lie; and it was of no use for the poor sorrowful mother, no, nor yet sweet Miss Lucy, to try to alter his father's mind. But dear, dear! what an alteration there was in the boy when he did come home! His bright sparkling eyes were all that were left to know him by, and they seemed now to sparkle with pride and scorn, instead of good humour as they used to do. He had grown, too, to be tall; but so pale and thin he was, and weakly! And the worst of it was, he had lost his love for home, if he ever had it. The memory of his disgrace stuck to him, that was plain, and chilled his heart—turned it to ice, like.

"I can't bear this place," he said to me one day, when I was at work on the grounds, and nobody else was near. "I can't bear the place"—he stamped on the ground as he said it: "I wonder you can stop here, and work on and on, as you do, when you might get away and never see it again."

I said I had a very good place; and so I had, for I was raised to be a sort of under gardener. Mr. Milbrook was proud of his garden, and kept two men always at work. It was he who had the yew-trees grubbed up. Well, I said mine was a good place, and I wasn't tired of it, and didn't want to throw it up.

"Well," he said, "you may be right, and it may be a good thing for you to think as you do. But, if it wasn't for my poor mother and Lucy, I would leave it to-morrow, ay, to-night;" and he set his teeth close together as he spoke, and clenched his hands in a desperate sort of way; "ay, to-night, if I had to go bare-foot and without a penny to help me on the road!"

Those were May Milbrook's very words; and they were the last words I heard him speak till more than twenty years afterwards.

#### SHAKSPEARE ANTICIPATED.

THE most original and creative minds have not always been able to escape the charge of imitation or positive plagiarism. Sometimes, however, great injustice has been inflicted upon the reputation of men of genius, by imputations of literary theft, in cases where a candid judgment would be able only to detect those parallelisms of thought and resemblances of illustration which must inevitably occur from time to time among the children of song. Even the lapse of ages and the separations of lands far asunder afford no guarantee against this reproduction of old ideas, or the simultaneous employment of the same train of thought. Like causes will, under similar circumstances, produce like effects; and it is by no means wonderful, therefore, that the same human life, with its ever-old and ever-new aspects; the same social customs; the same pursuits of war, fame, ambition, gain, piety, or usefulness; the same changeful seasons, bounteous nature, beaming stars, and burning sun,

should suggest to poetic minds images and modes of expression such as have found embodiment hundreds of times before. We should be more surprised if such were not the case. An instance of this has just met our eye, which will show that even the "myriad-minded" Shakspeare has been forestalled in that most justly celebrated passage of his on the "seven ages" of man:—

"All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players;  
They have their exits and their entrances;  
And one man in his time plays many parts,  
His acts being seven ages," etc. etc.

Now, without wishing to hint a surmise of plagiarism against the great dramatist, we would call attention to the striking points of similitude between the above sketch of Shakspeare and the following version of the same thought by the ancient Chrysostom. And, having read the two, we think many of our more reflective readers will agree with us in the conviction that, although the dramatist may bear away the palm for the sententious pregnancy and epigrammatic smartness of his sentences, yet the orator has brought out of the comparison a more monitory moral and a weightier lesson than the former ever aspired to inculcate.

To appreciate fully the force of the passage, it may be necessary to premise that theatres in ancient times were open during the day, and that the performers wore masks:—

"The rich man died, and was buried; Lazarus also departed—for I would not say died. The rich man's death was indeed a death and burial; but the poor man's death was a departure, a removal to a better world, a passing from the arena to the prize, from the sea to the haven, from the line of battle to the trophy, from toils to the crown. They both departed to the scenes of truth and reality. The theatre was closed, and the masks were laid aside. For as in a theatre disguises are used at midday, and many appear on the stage acting a borrowed part, with masks on their faces, reciting a story of ancient times, and representing deeds of other days; and one comes forward as a philosopher, not a philosopher in reality,—another a king, though not a king, but only assuming a royal appearance on account of the part he is to perform,—another is a physician, but has only a physician's dress,—another is a slave, who is really a free man,—another a teacher, while yet he knows not his letters; none of them are such as they appear to be, but are what they appear not. For one appears a physician who is not a physician, or a philosopher having his hair under his mask, or a soldier having only a soldier's dress. The aspect of the mask deceives; nature, however, the reality of which seems to be transferred, is not belied. So long as the delighted spectators keep their seats, the masks remain; but when evening comes on, and the performance is ended, and all leave the place, the masks are taken off, and he who on the stage was a king, is out of the theatre nothing but a brazier. The masks are laid aside, the deception vanishes, the reality appears. He who within was a free-man, is found without to be a slave; for, as I said, within is deception, without is the reality. The evening overtook them, the play was ended, the truth made its appearance. So it is in life, and at its close. The present state of things is a theatrical show; the business of men a play; wealth and poverty, the ruler and the subject, and such like things are representations. But when the day shall have passed, then that

fearful night will have come—rather, I should say, the day will have come, for night it indeed will be to the wicked, but day to the righteous—when the theatre will be closed, the masks thrown off, when each one shall be tried and his works; not each one and his wealth—not each one and his office—not each one and his dignity—not each one and his power—but each one and his works!"

### A MAGICAL TRIP TO THE GOLD REGIONS.

"WILL ye take a trip wi' me to the diggins to-night?" said a worthy Scotch friend of ours, whom we encountered the other evening when strolling down Regent-street. He accompanied his query with a hearty slap on the back, to awake us, perhaps, to a lively sense of the importance of his question, and to the necessity of an immediate decision; for, before we had time to suggest the desirability of a little time to consider the matter, he importuned us earnestly to accompany him. "*To-night?*" we mildly inquired. "*Yes, to-night?*" was the only reply. It was verging close upon eight o'clock; and we asked, with surprise, what could be the vehicle which started on such a voyage at an hour so unseasonable? But our friend vouchsafed no explanation—he was "going by magic" and would "bring us back to supper." Now we had heard of breakfasting in London, and supping at Paris; we had also listened to aerial machinists, as to their visionary projects for taking a trip through cloudland to America, India, or China, in a few days, and round the ball we live on, in a few weeks; but "*to the diggins and back in a couple of hours*" exceeded our limited comprehension; and as our stalwart friend persisted, seriously, as to the reality of his magical trip, we considered him somewhat "*daft*," to borrow a term from his own quaint vocabulary; but ultimately consented to accompany him, as the only means of satisfying his importunity.

We turned as the neighbouring clock struck eight into a large building, out of which, he said, the magical vehicle started; and he silently guided us into a large, dark, mysterious room, like the cabin of a ship, where we felt our way to a seat in a long narrow box. Two little jets of gas flickered dimly in the distance, one on each side of the opposite end of the room;

Yet from those flames,  
No light, but rather darkness visible,  
Served only to discover

the indistinct outlines of a number of individuals who were, with us, to embark on this mysterious voyage. Companionship alleviates apprehension; but here all was silent as the sepulchre; save now and then the gentle rustling of silks and satins, as some of the fair sex seemed to enter. "We're off," said our friend, as a gentle hand brought forth some "fairy-like music," from what, had we been quite sure we were still on *terra firma*, we should have designated an "instrument." A moment more of mystery, and a dark figure in the distance jumped up. "That's the captain," said our friend, "he'll tell us all about it, as we go along.. He is going to draw the curtain, and let us look out of

the window in a moment." This was grateful tidings; for a little light, on so dark a subject, began to be very desirable.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the captain, springing up, in the darkness, like a "jack in the box," "among the various topics which interest the public mind in the present day, there is, perhaps, not one so thoroughly engrossing, and so deeply important, as the subject of our Australian colonies and their gold fields. The places to which I shall now conduct you, I have visited already myself, during a residence of eight years in the colony." The course usually taken by vessels, he told us, was 16,000 miles, and occupied something less than four months; however, he promised to take us there and bring us back in a much shorter time than that—an announcement we were very glad to hear, especially that we were to come back in safety!

While he said he was taking us down to Plymouth, to avoid the annoyance of the "upper channel passage," all the signs of motion we could distinguish were a slight rustling, outside the curtains of what appeared to be the window of the ship's cabin we had so suddenly and mysteriously entered; these curtains soon drew up, and there was before us Plymouth Sound! The sea was calm, and the waves appeared to roll with a delightful gentleness; it seemed like a dream; but the sudden burst of smoke from the port-hole of a ship of war, in the distance, followed instantaneously by the report of a cannon—this was a fact so palpable, that we could not resist the undeniable evidence of our senses. We seemed to be rushing on the surface of the water at a fearfully rapid rate; but the continuous gazing on the waves soon had an unpleasant influence on our nerves; so we turned our eyes, for a moment's relief, on the dark mass of individuals whose undefined forms were scarcely perceptible in the gloom by which we were surrounded. The captain now told us that all visitors had left the ship, and that we were fairly under weigh; so it seemed, for the majestic Breakwater began to be visible out of our cabin window. Night came on, and we still skimmed across the surface of the water, with a fearful velocity; the captain presently pointed out that mighty monument of architectural ingenuity, Eddystone Lighthouse, with its bright lanterns casting forth their intense light, just as when we last gazed upon them from the poop of a "homeward bound." The moon rose majestically from the distant horizon, and as she cut her silvery path across the bosom of the ocean, cast additional beauty on all around us.

Everything transpired, on this magical voyage, with the most alarming velocity. While we turned our head, for an instant or two, reflecting on the mysteries round about us, a further rustling noise led us to look again out of the cabin window, where we beheld the cause of the "sensation"—a powerful sailor had fallen overboard, and was manfully combating with the waves. Two or three deep sighs were drawn near us, but who they came from we could not see. However, a boat was approaching him, and it is to be hoped the poor fellow was rescued from a watery grave; but we went at such a rate that we could not see whether he was or was not, and the captain did not condescend to tell

us. In less time than we have occupied in writing these words we found ourselves in the Bay of Biscay.

There was a great commotion amongst the waves, but the captain coolly said it was only what they called "a *half* gale of wind," a statement which could not fail to give rise to apprehensions as to the "other *half*;" which, if forthcoming then, would have made a somewhat serious matter of it. Flocks of stormy petrels, or "mother Carey's chickens," as the sailors call them, were hovering about. The captain said they followed us because of the scraps of victuals which the passengers threw overboard; but this remark must have referred to the sailors on deck; for nothing was thrown out of the window of our magical cabin. The "Propontis" from the Cape came steaming up; but it was only to "mock at our calamity;" for before we had time to speak, much less to write a word to our friends, concerning the wonderful events which had befallen us since leaving Regent-street, the "Propontis" was *non est*, and the sun broke forth into his tropical brilliancy, and the fruitful hills of sunny Madeira burst beautifully upon our astonished vision. We did not go into Funchal, but the captain expatiated in a very touching manner, and with much evident gusto, on the luscious fruits to be had there, and on the fine wines which, he said, would be very acceptable in the tropics we were now fast approaching. What might have transpired on deck, of course we cannot tell; but we had neither wines nor fruits in our dark cabin; we contented ourselves with the sight of the convents and churches—sparkling like beautiful gems set in the sunny sides and in the grassy bosom of these vine-covered hills!

Funchal fled from us, or else we fled from it; and after looking for a moment on a group of porpoises as they were playfully darting around the stern of our vessel, we turned to divest ourselves of the outermost *paletot*, by way of preparation for the "tropics," about which we had heard so much. While this was going on, the captain told us that on deck there was an awning erected under which the ladies sat with their knitting, netting, and *crochet*; but there was none of that in our cabin; indeed it was so dark, that after carefully depositing our coat on a vacant seat, we turned round and unconsciously sat upon our hat! A few minutes saw the hat again approximating to its proper shape; meanwhile, shoals of flying-fish were passing the window, their silvery scales sparkling in the sunbeams; they were persecuted on every hand, poor things; the dolphins were after them behind, and the sea-gulls ready to pounce upon them from above: in this dilemma, they often become entangled in the rigging of the ship, and thus are taken by the passengers; while the dolphins are harpooned and sliced up for a breakfast relish.

Plunging along, we presently came to the Peak of Teneriffe, which has thrust its cloud-capped head 13,000 feet above the level of the sea. It was visible at a distance of sixty miles. A few moments sufficed to approach and pass it, and by the interposition of the captain, the barbarous farce of king Neptune's visit at "the Line" was spared us. All was quiet—not a word was uttered, save by the captain, at the window; and his mysterious majesty,

the monarch of the waves, so far as we were concerned, was *non est*. Vessels, we were told, on approaching this region, are often becalmed:—

" Day after day, day after day  
They stick—nor breath, nor motion—  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean!"

But in this, as in every other respect, our "events" transpired with a magical fleetness. We had a little becalming, which gave us space to regard the celestial bodies; and the sight told us plainly we had left Britannia's shores. The "Great Bear" had walked away, and "Orion's Belt" no longer twinkled in the heavens with its silvery light; but the "Southern Cross" and its stellar companions had taken their places, and presented a novel and beautiful appearance.

The trade-winds springing up, we were carried to the Brazilian coast, and had a peep at Rio Janeiro, with its picturesque harbour and its sugar-loaf mountain. But this was getting far out of our way, as every young geographer at once perceives. So the captain dropped the curtain, and in a few moments of mysterious solitude and darkness, we made a desperate dash right across the South Atlantic ocean! When the curtain again rose, we looked out on the "half-way house," as emigrants facetiously designate the Cape of Good Hope. The great table mountain, behind Cape-town, was speedily covered with a cloth of murky clouds. This was an indication of an approaching gale. The vessels in the bay at once stood out to sea, and so did we. The thunders rolled, the lightnings flashed with fearful forkedness, while the rain streamed down in drenching torrents. The waves went up in horrible hills, and the ships rolled down into dreadful dales; but our magical craft went calmly on.

" And now the storm-blast came, and he  
Was tyrannous and strong;  
He struck us with his o'ertaking wings,  
And chased us south along.  
And a good south wind sprung up behind,  
The albatross did follow;  
And every day, for food or play,  
He came to the mariners' hollo."

But the wild imaginings of the "Ancient Mariner" found little sympathy with the matter-of-fact people who were bound for the auriferous mountains. They were devoid of dread at the curious bird, which

" In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,  
Did perch for vespers nine;  
While, all the night, through fog-smoke white,  
Glimmers the white moonshine."

Unfortunately for the poor albatross, they take such imaginings for "moonshine," and act accordingly. They have not the fear which the "mariner" had; but bait a hook fastened in a piece of wood and attached to a line floating after the stern of the ship, and the voracious bird gulps down the fat meat, the hook sticks in his crooked beak, and he is drawn up on the deck, the length of his pinions incapacitating him from soaring aloft therefrom.

The storm abated with that magical unnaturalness which had characterised the whole voyage,

and we entered upon the great whaling waters of the south. Here we had the good fortune to witness the capture of one of these leviathans of the great deep, which was knocking up quite a little tempest in his locality by furiously rolling his great body about. He went down for the purpose of feeding in the deep waters, where he lay with his gigantic mouth open, like a huge cave, with his comparatively disproportionate lower jaw for a little door thereof. He kept this great cavity open, till a sufficient number of small fish had been allured by the glistening whiteness of his tongue to enter it; and then he suddenly closed his terrific trap, and gulped them down into his capacious stomach without a single gasp! Having presently come again to the surface, he was harpooned from a whaler's boat on the look-out for him. This was not the whale from which the "whalebone" is taken, but the sperm whale, from which spermaceti is obtained; the other variety is chiefly found in the northern seas, and this chiefly in the southern.

But we have no time for disquisition on many curious scenes, for the land of promise is visible in the horizon, like a strip of cloud fringing the outermost edge of the waters. The captain said this was Cape Otway, and the curtain dropped till we got there; after which we entered the Port Philip Heads, and passed up to Melbourne. The climate was clear and dry, and the country, as we had so often been told, presented "a park-like" appearance. Here were handsome stone buildings, with shops selling—or at least professing to sell—"at less than prime cost," and living by the loss, as they do, or profess to do, here at home. Churches and chapels of every kind were there, with literary institutes, and hotels, and all the accompaniments of civilization. It looked rather curious, however, to see the carts or "drays" drawn by huge bullocks, instead of horses; and the shrill hallooing of the drivers was extremely singular. But while these observations were being taken, we had slipped on three miles, to Brighton, where the colonial aristocracy and merchants retire in the evening from the dust and business of the city. The trees were singular, too, being principally gum and she-oak trees.

We passed the "Mooney Ponds" to Mount Macedon, which rose abruptly in the distance. This was the beginning of the auriferous districts, and was forty miles from Melbourne. On our way we passed a group of the aborigines, ingeniously catching the wild turkeys which abound here. The she-oak trees were very striking; and as the wind whistled softly through their wiry, fibrous foliage, a low moaning music was heard, not unlike the sounds of the aeolian harp. Here were lots of contradictory sights to be seen; it was their summer, whereas it was our winter; and while with us it was close to Christmas, here they were regaling themselves with roast duck and green peas! They have cherries, but the stone grows outside. They have pears, but they are as hard as leather, and the stalk grows out of the thick end; their hedges are often of geraniums; parrots of gorgeous hues fly about as plentiful as sparrows at home; prawns of the finest kind are caught in the lagoons, or little lakes of the interior. The principal animal in these untrdden wilds is the kangaroo, which

has a long tail and long hind legs, with very short fore legs. At the approach of danger, it thrusts the sharp end of its tail into the ground, stands upon its hind legs, deposits its little ones in a pocket formed by nature in its bosom, and takes frightful leaps into its native thickets. Fine cod and other fish, the former weighing from 40 lbs. to 50 lbs.; also crayfish, mussels, cockles, and the usual productions of the sea, are found in the Goulburn, a fresh water river, which runs 1200 miles before it reaches the ocean at Adelaide; their swans are black, and the Australian jack-ass is a bird!

While musing over this land of contraries, we came upon an encampment of the aborigines with their gins\* and gunyahs†, in the lovely valley of Heidelberg, through which are seen the windings of the Yarra Yarra river. These natives, who occupy a very low place in the scale of humanity, feed on the kangaroo, wallaby, opossum, and other wild animals which they hunt in the bush, while they leave their gins at home in their gunyahs of bark to do the work! Having killed their animals, they roast them, a piece at a time, which they bite off as it gets black, gallantly leaving the odds and ends for their wives, who are not permitted to eat with these "lords of the creation."

The curtain dropped, and we saw nothing more till we came into the delightful valley of the Goulburn, where innumerable flocks of sheep were spreading themselves abroad, and grazing peacefully amidst the rich herbage of these natural and boundless parks. There we saw the "Snowy Mountains," and afterwards Geelong (the future rival of the city of Melbourne, which we have already seen), and the Barrabool Hills, where there is some of the finest land in the colony or anywhere else.

But it was time to go to the diggings, and we passed on forty miles, to Ballarat; but the "diggers" had left for the more productive fields of Mount Alexander, whither we at once hastened. The scenes in our rapid transportation over the road to the diggings were very amusing—men, women, and children, masters and servants, on horseback, in bullock drays, and on foot. When night approaches, the forest tracks are not traceable, and the diggers encamp, the bullocks and horses are tethered, fires are lighted, tea and damper are partaken of under the shady trees. "Damper" is a mixture of flour and water baked under the wood ashes, and, when well made, is said to be a very tolerable substitute for bread. So they say; and bush travelling, no doubt, removes many little fancies with regard to delicacies for the stomach, which are cherished and attended to in cities. The scene was striking. Here they sat round a great fire, blazing and crackling. Then they roll themselves up in their possum rugs, with a saddle, or the softest stone they can procure, for a pillow; and thus they gently glide into the arms of Morphus! With the morning light, they are up to their tea and damper, and then proceed on their journey.

Arriving at Mount Alexander, the scene outstrips our limited powers of description. Men of all ages and every clime were digging, or washing the earth already dug, in the "cradles" so often

\* Women.

† Huts.

described—a busy, quiet, and motley crew. A little group of aborigines listlessly looking on, with their short pipes in their mouths, gives rise to a feeling of wonder that this singular people, with all their love of glare and glittering finery, had turned to no account the "nuggets" of gold which, at first, might sometimes almost be kicked up as you walked along! Yet such is the fact.

We speedily came within forty miles of Sydney, the capital, having arrived at the Illawarra district, surrounded by mountains, and possessing some of the richest soil in the colony. As we seemed to fly along, we saw the aborigines spearing the kangaroos among the palm trees, round the trunks of which beautiful parasitical plants were twining and hanging in luxuriant festoons from the branches. In a sheet of water close by, called Tom Thumb's Lagoon, the natives were spearing the fish with which it abounds; while on the margin of the lake a number of pelicans, cormorants, and black swans, were also doing a little fishing on their own account.

Then we came to Woolongong, Botany Bay, and Sydney Heads, and thus entered Port Jackson, and had a fine view of the city of Sydney, which is indeed "beautiful for situation." The waters of Port Jackson are studded with numerous picturesque little islands, which glisten on their glassy bosom like so many mighty emeralds set in silver. The city has 70,000 inhabitants, and handsome shops fitted up quite in the London style. But it was not permitted us to tarry here, so we hastened on to the Paramatta river and the Bathurst country. On our way we witnessed another phase of colonial life—a stockman engaged in driving cattle. These hardy and enterprising fellows are considered the best horsemen in the world. We saw also a flock of emus, which are very interesting birds, but space forbids details. Many romantic spots, too numerous and too diversified to be separately alluded to, were also seen in this journey. We paid a flying visit to the diggings at Summerhill creek, where the first discovery of gold was made; and at length arrived at the Ophir diggings, where the captain told us many interesting anecdotes of an experimental character, and showed us two of the native mounted police. It is very apparent that all the diggers do not succeed; but he informed us of a party who lent some young men £30, on condition that he should have a certain per centage on their profits. Eight weeks passed and not a pound was earned by any of them; but their fortunes changed one day, and in a week or two they sent their patron £50 as his share of the spoils! It is evidently a pursuit full of risks.

In the midst of these narrations, night drew on apace; no twilight lent an excuse to an half hour's gossip; the moon rose most magically and majestically from the end of the beautiful valley which was the scene of these gold-seeking operations, and, as she mounted higher and higher in the azure arch which covered us, she tipped the rugged summits of the neighbouring hills with silver; at their bases, as the clouds, removing from her face, ever and anon let her light shine down upon us, we beheld the diggers grouped round their blazing fires, with tea and damper, and various accompaniments. We were entranced with the interest of

the scene, when, lo! there was a sudden rush of the mysterious beings who occupied our cabin—the curtain fell—our friend led us away with the crowd, and we emerged into the visible world out of the next door to the Polytechnic at 10 o'clock, having been absent a couple of hours, delighted and instructed by the trip, and anxious to visit half or all the world on the same terms, to see and hear what manner of men, and fruits, and flowers, and animals flourish in regions yet to us unknown. Our magical trip had been, our reader will have anticipated, through the medium of a panorama.

#### A PEASANT'S REPLY.

A MAN of subtle reasoning ask'd  
A peasant, if he knew  
Where was th' internal evidence  
That proved the Bible true?  
The terms of disputative art  
Had never reach'd his ear;  
He laid his hand upon his heart,  
And only answer'd, "Here!"

#### THE CALORIC SHIP ERICSSON.

(FROM THE "NEW YORK LITERARY WORLD," AS QUOTED IN THE "LONDON LITERARY GAZETTE.")

ON Tuesday, the eleventh day of January, in the year 1853, the caloric ship "Ericsson" made its first public essay. The "Ericsson" got under weigh from her anchorage off the Battery at half-past nine o'clock, and proceeding out of the harbour, through the Narrows into the lower bay, to a distance of about twelve miles, returned at half-past twelve, having accomplished the trip without a stoppage or hindrance, or any untoward result.

The invited guests on board were principally members of the press of New York. The "Ericsson" was thus confidently submitted to the judgment of the public opinion of our metropolis; and the expression of that public opinion, as manifested on the succeeding day, in the leading column of every journal in our city, was a unanimous acknowledgment of the triumphant success of the great invention of Ericsson.

I was on board the caloric ship on this occasion, was a witness of this triumph, and I mark it as an era in my life. I could not resist a courteous summons like this: "Captain Ericsson is very desirous of having an opportunity of explaining to you the principles and operation of the caloric engine, and for the purpose proposes to make a short trip with the caloric ship, down the bay and back, to-morrow (Tuesday) morning. Your presence on the occasion is particularly solicited by Captain Ericsson and Mr. Kitching. A small steam-boat will be at the Barge office dock, foot of Whitehall Street, precisely at 9 A. M. to convey you on board."

The "small steam-boat," puffing and blowing like an asthmatic old gentleman or broken-winded horse, getting up and letting off steam, finally, after a very manifest struggle and effort, brought us alongside the "Ericsson," which was floating off the Battery in quiet beauty and calm dignity. There was none of the blowing and snorting and impetuous seething of the waves of those steam monsters, preparatory to an onset, but the caloric

ship lay tranquilly along the bay with its great proportions, like a giant asleep. At the gangway each of the company was presented in turn to Captain Ericsson, who stood prepared to receive us.

Captain Ericsson is a man of fifty years of age, of a muscular, well-developed, and strongly knit frame; he is of middle size, has a firm tread, a person which gives the assurance of reserved strength, and a head with all the proper intellectual developments, the high forehead and prominent brow marking the man of thought and the philosopher; he has a dark complexion, and hair somewhat whitened by time, black eyes, introspective and reflective rather than observing, a decisive mouth, and the mixed temperament combining the nervous and bilious, which distinguishes the powerful in action and the steady in endurance. His head rises in a phrenological summit of benevolence; he was heard to remark, the only sign he gave of self-gratulation on his triumph, that he was proud to be the means, through his invention, of saving life.

Of the antecedents of the inventor of the caloric engine, I have learned this.

John Ericsson was born in Sweden, in 1803. He early showed a taste for mechanics, and at the age of eleven attracted the notice of Count Platen, who obtained for him a cadetship in an engineer corps. He afterwards entered the Swedish army, and was employed in the survey of northern Sweden. While occupied with his favourite study of mechanics, he projected his "flame engine." In 1826 he visited England. While there, in 1829, he competed for the prize offered by the Liverpool and Manchester railway for the best locomotive, and produced an engine that attained the wonderful speed, at that time, of fifty miles an hour. His propeller, his semi-cylindrical engine, his centrifugal blower, his distance instrument for measuring distances at sea, his hydrostatic gauge, his pyrometer, and other ingenious inventions, have already made the name of Ericsson famous in the scientific world. The caloric engine, which has now arrived at the consummation of success, was first brought before the scientific world of London twenty years ago, and was rejected by men of science as an impracticability, and as involving the absurdity of perpetual motion. Faraday, Brunel, and Ure, after a short resistance, finally conceded the practicability of the invention, and Faraday endorsed the caloric engine in those famous lectures of his, before the London Institution. Fox, whose name is identified with the success of the great London Exhibition, was a pupil of Ericsson.

With this passing notice of the distinguished gentleman we have just been introduced to at the gangway, let us mount above on the upper deck. Standing aft and looking forward, there is a clear view, a clean deck, and a pure atmosphere—no black, ugly, monstrous smoke-pipe, with its confused web of iron gear to obstruct the vision, no Tartarean fumes to choke the breath and pollute the air, no shower of cinders to blind the eyes, no steam bluster to deafen the ears and confuse the head. Midships, between the wheels, placed two on either side, are four short graceful hollow pillars, in pure white turned up with gold, like marble columns with gilded capitals.

We have hardly time to look abroad about the bay, in the enjoyment of one of those fine mornings like that of an October day, such as have been vouchsafed to us during this gentle winter; a hasty glance, however, reveals to us a bright blue sky overhead, a light misty vapour creeping along the smooth surface of the bay, and softening the distances of the Hudson and the seaward view, the red pipe of the Cunard steamer on the Jersey side, blushing at its overgrown awkwardness, the fussy high-pressure little tow-boats, easier heard than seen, the scattered sails on the bay, and the New York docks, choked with their greedy swallow of monstrous steamers, great merchantmen, and all kinds of busy craft, large and small.

Captain Lowber, from his station on the starboard wheel-house, gives his command "go ahead." The giant Caloric awakes on the instant, and taking in one full breath of the pure atmosphere, which is heard like the distant sound of a rushing cataract, bends to his mighty work, and goes on with the quiet, order, and certainty of life, until bidden to his rest.

The absorbing interest was, of course, the machinery, and the curious were on the alert, and were in and about everywhere staring at the great cylinders, which expanded in their rotundity like enormous brewer's vats, and wondering at the small furnaces, which smouldered like domestic ovens, or the kitchen fire where a steak might be done to a turn, and expressing their surprise at the power, the great effect and simple cause. The *single* fireman and the *single* engineer on duty had nothing to do but to answer questions, which was certainly no sinecure, like that of attending upon the well disciplined giant engine, which Captain Ericsson said, "your nursery-maid or child might tend."

The visitors, after a well served breakfast, which proved that the Ericsson, in the full confidence of success, had revealed itself to the world, perfect from the cook's galley to the saloon, were all summoned into the handsome cabin, to listen to Captain Ericsson's exposition of his invention. The inventor, by the aid of a diagram, explained the principle and operation of the caloric engine. His voice was clear and distinct; his English, though toned in a foreign accent, was idiomatic and correct; his manner modest yet confident. He felt as he said, "I have conquered every obstacle, there is no single practical difficulty left." The eager press was there catching up every word. Expressions of wonder and admiration were frequent, and the applause hearty and spontaneous. Leaving to history to record and art to paint this interesting scene, I must attempt an explanation of the caloric engine.

The great principle of this invention is the reiterated employment of the heat used to expand the air. The apparatus by which this is effected is called the regenerator, which is a series of wire nettings, placed close together, through which the warm and cold air are both made to pass, the former imparting its caloric to the metallic wire, and the latter receiving its heat from it. M. Beaumont, in a scientific description in the "Courier des Etats-Unis" of Ericsson's invention, has thus happily illustrated the *modus operandi* of this apparatus:—"We can form a clear idea of it by supposing that a man has his mouth filled with a

heated metallic sponge ; on inspiration, the outer air will, in passing through the sponge, become heated, and will reach the lungs warm, while the sponge, having imparted its heat, will become cold ; on expiration of this warm air through the sponge, the air will heat the sponge, and the air itself will pass out into the atmosphere cold."

Ericsson's engine is composed of two cylinders, placed vertically, one above the other. The lower one is the large working cylinder ; the one above, the smaller supply cylinder, the office of which latter is to force the air into a reservoir placed above it, and which reservoir is connected with the working cylinder by means of a tube communicating with the regenerator ; this tube has certain valves, by means of which this communication may be opened or closed. Under the bottom of the working cylinder is a furnace.

To start the engine, the fire being lighted, the first thing to do is to force the air into the reservoir by a pump or some means outside ; then the communication with the working cylinder is opened ; the air rushing into this cylinder forces up its piston, and as this piston is connected by iron rods with the piston of the supply cylinder above, the air in the latter, by the ascent of its piston, is forced into the reservoir. When the piston has ascended to its height, the valves are so arranged as to shut off the reservoir of cold, and to allow the hot air in the working cylinder to pass off through the regenerator. This air becomes cool before passing into the atmosphere, having imparted its heat to the metallic meshes in the regenerator ; the weight of the piston is sufficient to make it descend. The valves being now as they were at the beginning, the piston ascends again ; the air which now passes from the reservoir to the working cylinder heats itself as it passes through the regenerator, and the furnace has only to supply the small quantity of heat that may have been carried off with the air that has been allowed to escape, or has been lost by radiation.

The engine, once started, moves on, supplying itself with air from the atmosphere, which rushes through valves into the vacuum produced in the supply cylinder by the descent of its piston, and then is forced into the reservoir by the ascent of the piston.

Such is the mechanism by which Ericsson has applied heated air as a motive power. It has simplicity, like all great improvements, and seems, in accordance with the law of progress, to reveal to us a first truth. It is the air we breathe by which it moves, and the poet's line—

"She walks the waters like a thing of life"

—when applied to the breathing ship of Ericsson, loses its poetry by becoming a fact.

The great commercial advantage of the new invention is its economy of heat, and thence the saving of fuel, freight room, labour, and expense. Atlantic steam navigation has proved a failure, in spite of the brilliant career of those perfect models of steamers, the Atlantic, Pacific, and Baltic. Steam has never been able to overcome the great commercial obstacle under the cover of which that ill-omened, oracular Dionysius Lardner, still claims to have been a seer in his prophecy of the impracticability of ocean steam navigation. The ocean

steamers do not pay—they cost more than they bring. The end is swallowed up in the means. If a generous, a profuse government had not come to their aid, our proud Atlantic steamers would have been long since swept from the ocean, and the only record of their glory and of the shame of commerce, would have been the beggarly profit-and-loss account of a merchant's ledger. The caloric ship is over 2000 tons, has an engine of 600-horse power, a speed of eight or nine knots, and consumes only six tons of coal in twenty-four hours, and *will pay* ; thus heated air does what steam has never done, and Ericsson succeeds to the laurels of Watt and Fulton. The speed of the caloric ship is the only disappointment to the sanguine, but the inventor positively states, and is not contradicted, that the speed can be increased in proportion to the size of the cylinders. The cylinders of the present ship are fourteen feet in diameter, the largest ever made ; it was, however, the desire of Ericsson to have had them two feet larger, but he yielded, and, as he states, with regret, to the supposed practical difficulty of constructing such. Hogg and Delamater now, at their own risk, undertake to construct cylinders of twenty feet in diameter, and future caloric ships will be the first in speed, as the "Ericsson" is now first in economy.

Ericsson is a modest man, and leaves to his work to speak the triumph of his genius ; but he has a triumph of the heart, of which he boasts. "My greatest happiness," says he, "is, that my invention will be the means of saving life." There are none of the boilers to burst, the flues to collapse, and the complicated perplexity of the steam-engine to confuse, disorder, and bring danger and death. The waters of the Hudson and the Mississippi will cease to be stained with blood ; the traveller's farewell will no longer be uttered in fear and trembling. Steam has been to man an excellent servant, but too often a cruel master ; heated air will prove more faithful, and always humane.

In a comparison in the "Evening Post" of the expense of the "Ericsson" and the Atlantic steamers, the economy of the former is strikingly exhibited in a saving of 25,000 dollars to the "Ericsson" in each trip. How much more striking does this economy appear on a comparison with the steamers on the Pacific, where fuel, labour, and freight-room are so costly ; where coal costs thirty-five dollars a ton, and has cost fifty dollars ; where fire-men are paid forty dollars a month, and have been paid three hundred dollars ; and where freight costs one hundred dollars a ton, and has been refused at any price. The thorough ventilation of the "Ericsson," which necessarily results from the principle of its moving power requiring constant supplies of fresh air, would save that enormous sacrifice of health and life in those worse than slave ships, the thronged, stifling steamers and sailing vessels that navigate the tropics and western coast of North and South America. A fireman is not necessarily a salamander, and I therefore was not surprised at the horrors I have so often witnessed, of the fire-room of a steamer in the tropics. The glowing heat of the furnaces, always busily kept to the height of its intensity, added to the hot breath of a tropical atmosphere, was beyond human endurance. Constant relays of firemen succeeded

each other; watch relieved watch every half hour; those that went down were worn and languid from past work and the stifling tropical atmosphere, while those who came up were exhausted with the heat, and fell fainting or in convulsions, and not seldom in death, on the hot deck. It would be well for humanity's sake that there were no vessels but Ericsson's to navigate a tropical sea.

Is the steam-monarch to be deposed, whose sway extends over the whole world, to whom sea and land and nature are subject, who has subdued the powers of the earth, and who has given his name to the age?

Steam has been a useful servant to man; it has ploughed the field, plied the shuttle, turned the mill, worked the printing-press, opened the mine, driven the car, and sailed the ship; but it has blood on its hands, it has done dark deeds, it has committed foul murders. Heated air is equally capable, and is saving and trustworthy—an obedient servant to man, and yet a monarch destined to succeed to the empire of steam over the whole world.

Ericsson, who is not a man of wealth, gracefully said, "I have never wanted means to carry on my experiments;" and while men of such generous enterprise as Mr. Kitching, who is the chief capitalist of the invention, have money, no man of science will want means.

Ericsson is a Swede, and Mr. Kitching is an Englishman; but Americans have the honour of having them as fellow citizens, and the satisfaction of knowing that the caloric engine was perfected in the atmosphere of American enterprise.

#### LONGFELLOW'S POETICAL WORKS.

THE creative power which called forth the earth and the heavens is the same everywhere and for ever; yet its workings have been various in their beauty and their strength. The "desert gardens," the miles of falling foam, the snowy steppes, and the volcanic mountains of other lands, differ essentially from the features of England's beauty. So in the human genius which emanates from the divine, and receives power in its turn to become creative, we may trace the same diversity, while we admire the same unity. Genius is intrinsically the same in all times, and kindreds, and countries, stretching out its hand of twin brotherhood across wide mains and vanished cycles; yet its voice is modulated to the various harmonies around—its beauty is coloured according to the diverse rays of the sun. Perhaps these marks of distinction, though not of difference, may be more decidedly traced in the genius which speaks to us from beyond the Atlantic, than in that of any other country. At first sight, this appears strange, when the dwellers in the far west are indeed bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. America, however, is emphatically a "new world." It is true that giant stems, and primeval hills, and hunting fields of red-browed sachems, bear witness of elder days; but with the mental constitution of America all old things have passed away. Transatlantic genius, therefore, is in a transition state—from the cradle, wherein she was well-nigh smothered by the cares and commonplaces of a "money-making nation," and the school where she has gathered stores of

immature beauty, to the higher sphere whence her glorious voice shall yet be more fully heard and understood.

In American genius, when strictly national, or rather American poetry—for it is to that phase of genius that we mean at present to confine our attention—we may find several marked characteristics. It is not so much the poetry of memory as of possession and anticipation; it boasts itself of to-day and to-morrow and forgetteth yesterday. The mighty past, which, in its march of ages, has left such ineffaceable footprints on the surface of the old world, is to America as a thing that hath never been. She has no stately ruins of castle and keep; no ivy-grown altars where worshipped the men of bygone centuries; no ancient mansions, where dead hearts lived and loved like our own; no ballads and roundelay; no trophies of joust and tourney; no time-hallowed dreams of unhallored realities. The American poet, therefore, casts himself into the present; its realities, which in vulgar heads might be as baser metal, he transmutes into fine gold; and he surrounds with a halo the work, the struggle, and the sorrow of to-day. In short, his province is—or ought to be, as one peculiarly liberated from all conventional trammels of the past—to make beauty useful, and usefulness beautiful, and to call men to the right performance of life's daily and difficult crusade. The lyre, however, that hath no strings for the past, is not confined to the present; there are richer chords and cadences, there is beauty more thrilling, and voices which speak more tenderly of home, in the harmonies of the future. This is the combination which we require in these our days. The impression of life's earnestness and life's reality is deepening on every mind; the great 'to come' is nearing in its majesty, and we reject the lighter aliments of sentiment and aesthetic beauty which once fed and refreshed our souls. There is a mighty work to be worked, of which each daily service is a part and a portion—faith that waveth to be strengthened—a love that waxeth cold to be warmed. There is a great building to be reared, which is built of the little stones of our daily paths, the keystone of which is with God in heaven:—

"For the structure that we raise,  
Time is with materials filled,  
Our to-days and yesterdays  
Are the blocks with which we build."\*

Who shall say that poetry is degraded by thus bringing her mighty energies to bear upon the urgent needs and purposes of the near and the present?

"Oh thou sculptor, painter, poet,  
Lay this lesson to thy heart,  
From the block that lieth nearest,  
Shape from that thy work of art."†

Who shall say that poetry is degraded by casting her forward into the future, to draw from the fountains of time some drops of its fulness—to steal from the shadows of eternity some gleams of its lightsome beauty?

\* "The Builders," by H. Longfellow.  
† "Gaspar Recerra," by H. Longfellow.

In these remarks, we have had partly in view the American poetry of America's greatest poet, Henry Wordsworth Longfellow. We use the prefix American as contrasted with the later works of which we have to speak hereafter. Not only is Professor Longfellow the strongest and sweetest of transatlantic singers, but he is the one whose words are most like the "winged seed," and who, in other lands, is most loved and cherished as a household guest. Pondered by the domestic hearth—read aloud to the loved and the appreciating—associated with thoughts of soothed sorrow and strengthened weakness—Henry Longfellow has won a home for his songs in English hearts. From the stillness of his life's even tenor, he has given forth utterances which echo like the peans and trumpets of a victory—which urge men onward in the battle of life, gathering weapons from the armoury of daily circumstance.

Who has ever read his noble lyric, the Psalm of Life, without feeling that this is poetry *almost* suited to the needs of life—*almost* worthy to be sung to the timbrel of Miriam and the lyre of David? Would that its lifesome and worksome spirit were more widely diffused amongst us!

"Tell me not in mournful numbers,  
Life is but an empty dream,  
For the soul is dead that slumbers,  
And things are not what they seem.  
  
"Life is real!—life is earnest!  
And the grave is not its goal;  
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
Was not spoken of the soul.  
  
"Not enjoyment and not sorrow,  
Is our destined end or way;  
But to act, that each to-morrow  
Find us farther than to-day.  
  
"Art is long, and time is fleeting,  
And our hearts, though stout and brave,  
Still, like muffled drums, are beating  
Funeral marches to the grave.  
  
"In the world's broad field of battle,  
In the bivouac of life,  
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!  
Be a hero in the strife!  
  
"Trust no future, how'er pleasant!  
Let the dead past bury its dead!  
Act, act in the living present!  
Heart within, and God o'erhead!  
  
"Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints in the sands of time:  
  
"Footprints that perhaps another,  
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
Seeing, shall take heart again.  
  
"Let us then be up and doing,  
With a heart for any fate;  
Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labour and to wait."

One of the charms in the poems before us is a certain fresh originality, which has had its eyes opened to see beauty where none had seen it before—to find fountains of water in the wilderness. This charm, pure and practical, invests also things that were hackneyed and worn out; thus from the anvil and forge of the blacksmith, from the droppings of the rainy day, from the oft-lauded light of stars, from the bridge, the river, and the

churchyard we have new treasures of thought and beauty lavished upon us. It would seem, too, as if this man, brave in heart and strong in spirit, had yet sounded the depths of sorrow and bereavement, so true, so simple is the voice which speaks from his heart to our hearts; witness the "Footsteps of Angels," or its twin gem, "Resignation," from which we extract the following:—

"There is no flock, however watched and tended,  
But one dead lamb is there!  
There is no fireside, howso'er defended,  
But has one vacant chair!  
  
"The air is full of farewells to the dying,  
And mournings for the dead;  
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,  
Will not be comforted!  
  
"Let us be patient! these severe afflictions,  
Not from the ground arise,  
But oftentimes celestial benedictions  
Assume this dark disguise.  
  
"We see but dimly through the mists and vapours,  
Amid these earthly damps;  
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers,  
May be heaven's distant lamps.  
  
"There is no death! What seems so is transition;  
This life of mortal breath,  
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,  
Whose portal we call death.  
  
"She is not dead—the child of our affection—  
But gone unto that school  
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,  
And Christ himself doth rule.  
  
"In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,  
By guardian angels led,  
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,  
She lives whom we call dead.  
  
"Day after day we think what she is doing  
In those bright realms of air;  
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,  
Behold her grown more fair.  
  
"Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken  
The bond which nature gives,  
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,  
May reach her where she lives."

It is in his fugitive pieces, with the exception of his exquisite "Evangeline," that our author has displayed his greatest strength and beauty; his genius seems hardly capable of that sustained, steady flight which is needful for the poet of an epic or a drama, while, in his shorter cycles amidst the upper intelligences, he never fails to collect materials of beauty and nutriment. Lying open before us is the poem which we have noticed as an exception; it is more than a poem, it is a picture painted with artistic beauty, and owes little to adventitious circumstances. The ornaments of metaphor and simile are sometimes abrupt and startling. The subordinate characters of father, priest, lawyer, and lover, are far in the background; while even the descriptions of the grand loveliness of American nature are but as the draperies which surround the principal figure—the sweet and womanly Evangeline, "the sunshine of St. Eulalie."

Previous to 1713, Acadia (now Nova Scotia) was a beautiful and flourishing French colony in North America, but in that year it was ceded to England. An accusation was brought against the Acadians of having given succour to the French and Indians; and the British Lieutenant Governor, having assembled 418 of the best men of the district

in the church at Grand Pré, pronounced the unexpected and stunning doom that the French inhabitants were to be immediately exiled from their "happy valley," and scattered amidst the distant French colonies. The entire male population were forced to embark in transports. Their wives and children, though permitted to follow in a few days, were in many cases sent to different parts, lost all traces of each other, and were separated for ever; so far the tale is matter of history.

We first become acquainted with "gentle Evangeline," the daughter of Benedict Bellefontaine, one of the principal Acadians, as the joy of the village and the sweet directress of her father's household. Soon to pass from that sunny home to a still sunnier, as she hoped, at the feast of her betrothal,

" Evangeline stood amidst the guests of her father,  
Bright was her smiles, and words of welcome and gladness  
Felt from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she  
gave it."

Hidden beneath the brightness, however, was the heroism of a loving woman, which circumstances had not yet called forth. Up to this time it seemed only that

" Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's  
daughter,  
Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel son of the black-  
smith."

The storm, however, was near that, like the sea tempest, was to wrench from the depths of her soul the treasures hidden there. The terrible decree and consequent departure found Evangeline strong and giving strength, whose heart a day before had been but the receptacle of "farewell words and sweet good-nights on the door-step."

" Halfway down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,  
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of af-  
fliction;—

Calmly and sadly waited, until the procession approached  
her,

And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.  
Tears then filled her eyes, and eagerly running to meet  
him,

Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder,  
and whispered—

" Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another,  
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances  
may happen!"

Smiling she spoke these words; then suddenly paused,  
for her father

Saw she slowly advancing. Alas! how changed was his  
aspect;

Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from his  
eye, and his footstep

Heavier seemed with the weight of the weary heart in  
his bosom;

But, with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck and  
embraced him,

Speaking words of endearment where words of comfort  
availed not.

Thus to the Gasperian's mouth moved on that mournful  
procession."

The old man's heart was, however, broken, and he died on the sea-beach within sight of the burning village of Grand Pré. Then commenced the search of Evangeline for her lover, which for so long was the business of her life; derided by some, blamed by others, wooed by many, she exhibits the decision and the confidence of her "true love," her purpose never wavering—her faith in her lover never faltering. Her faithful friend and com-

panion, Felician, cheers her on in the following beautiful though not altogether orthodox words:—

" O, daughter! thy God thus speaketh within thee!  
Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted;  
If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning  
Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of  
refreshment;  
That which the fountain sends forth returns to the foun-  
tain.

Patience; accomplish thy labour; accomplish thy work  
of affection!

Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is  
godlike.

Therefore accomplish thy labour of love, till the heart is  
made godlike,  
Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more  
worthy of heaven!"

At last, after many a weary year of travel in east,  
west, north, and south, one lovely month of May  
Evangeline and a little band of exiled Acadians, on  
their way up the golden Mississippi, were greeted  
by their old friend Basil the blacksmith, in greater  
prosperity than ever; but, alas! "weary with wait-  
ing and unhappy." Gabriel had departed that very  
morning; and when the exiles were slumbering at  
noon-tide amidst the water-lilies of the Atchafalaya  
lakes, the lovers had passed each other uncon-  
sciously. Still forth again Evangeline wandered,  
not discouraged, seeking her beloved amidst mis-  
sionary tents, and battle camps, in hamlet, forest,  
town, and prairie—finding here a trace, and there  
a record of his name, or his footsteps, but of the  
living and loving one—nothing.

" Fair was she and young when in hope began the long  
journey,  
Faded was she and old when in disappointment it ended."

Not without its uses had been the long life of trial  
and sorrow. "The patience and abnegation of self  
and devotion to others" which she had there  
learned, sent her forth amidst fetid lanes and  
garrets full of disease and sorrow.

" Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow  
Weekly with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her Saviour."

The intense concentrated love was now diffused,

" But like to some odorous spices  
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with  
aroma."

The thoughts and the footsteps once so mildly  
roaming, turned steadfastly to seek the better coun-  
try, like "leaves to the light." The mists and  
vapours of earthly passion rolled away,

" And she saw the world far below her,  
Dark no longer, but illuminated with love."

Then for the first time her soul uttered the true  
"Excelsior." Within the heart of Evangeline,  
though chastened and heaven-aspiring, still lived  
the image of her lover, not changed, but transfigured—the love not forgotten though sanctified. A time of pestilence came, and by night and by day  
she tended the stricken and the dying. One summer sabbath morning, when she entered the hos-  
pital laden with flowers,

" That the dying once more might rejoice in their beauty  
and fragrance,"

she saw the face of an old man who lay dying, but  
for a moment it had assumed the form and features

of early manhood. The tender cry, " Gabriel, oh ! my beloved," brought back to the old man as

" In a dream, once more the home of his childhood ; Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them, Village, and mountain, and woodlands ; and walking under their shadow,

As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision. Tears came into his eyes ; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids, Vanished the vision away ; but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.

Vainly he strove to rise ; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him, Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom. Sweet was the light of his eye ; but it suddenly sank into darkness,

As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement. All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow, All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing, All the dull deep pain, and constant anguish of patience ! And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,

Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, ' Father, I thank thee !'

We have lingered long over this poem because the impression grows upon us as we read, that it is a creation — a personality. Like the *Thekla* of Schiller and Coleridge, *Evangeline* lives and loves, and we live and love with her.

There is a peculiarity in Longfellow's poems which must strike every reflective reader ; it is the nearness to the great life-truth without its actual possession. With the justest views of life and sorrow, and especially of the needfulness of the struggle, race, and conflict which must take place in the inner being of all who are journeying from life militant to life triumphant, he yet fails to inculcate the true wisdom and the true faith. He bids the struggler God-speed in his struggle, but he points not to the strength which gives the victory. He bids the sorrow-stricken

" Fear not in a world like this,  
And they shall know ere long—  
Know how sublime a thing it is  
To suffer and be strong."

But he tells not of the Sorrow-bearer ; he urges to everything that is lofty and aspiring, but he hints not at the poverty of spirit which must go before ; in short, his poetry lacks the charm and the wisdom of the gospel. Some will say, so much the better ; but the poet was sent upon the earth as a teacher, and he teaches unsuccessfully, unless through the way, the truth, and the life. The poet was sent as a mighty lever to raise the souls of men ; and to what shall he raise them unless to a blood-bought heaven ? While the reflective reader has long mourned over this deficiency in the author before us, yet his nearness to the truth, and the usefulness of his energetic and arousing lays, made it a matter of very earnest hope and expectation that, in his next work, a marked progression would be visible, and that Professor Longfellow would stand bravely forth as the Christian lyrist of his times. In these days of struggle and woe amidst the nations, it was hoped that an earnest cheering Protestant voice might have sung and spoken from that American dwelling. The new volume, the "Golden Legend," has made its appearance ; upon it we cannot enter at present, but it may suffice now to say, that we believe that to all classes of readers it has been the cause of deep disappointment.

#### THE KING AND HIS SCOTCH COOK.

BY GRANT THORBURN.

THE witty Earl of Rochester being in company with king Charles II, his queen, the chaplain, and some ministers of state, after they had been discoursing on business, the king suddenly exclaimed : " Let our thoughts be unbended from the cares of state, and give us a generous glass of wine, that cheereth, as the scripture saith, God and man." The queen hearing this, modestly said she thought there could be no such text in the scriptures, and that it was but little else than blasphemy. The king replied that he was not prepared to turn to the chapter and verse ; but was sure he had met with it in his scripture reading. The chaplain was applied to, and he was of the queen's opinion. Rochester, suspecting the king to be right, slipped out of the room to inquire for a bible among the servants. None of the latter could read, but David the Scotch cook, and he, they said, always carried a bible about him. David being called, recollects both the text and where to find it. Rochester told David to be in waiting, and returned to the king. This text was still the subject of conversation, and Rochester proposed to call in David, who, he said, was well acquainted with the scriptures. David was called, and being asked the question, produced his bible and read the text. It was from the parable of the trees of the woods going forth to appoint a king over them : Judges, 9th chapter and 13th verse : " And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees ? " The king smiled, the queen asked pardon, the chaplain blushed. Rochester then asked this doctor of divinity if he could interpret the text, now it was produced. The chaplain was mute. The earl therefore applied to David for the exposition. The cook immediately replied : " How much wine cheereth man," looking Rochester in his eyes, " your lordship knoweth [no doubt David had seen him *four* a dozen times], and that it cheereth God, I beg leave to say that under the old testament dispensation there were meat offerings and drink offerings ; the latter consisted of wine, which was typical of the blood of the Mediator, which, by a metaphor, was said to cheer God, as he was well pleased in the way of salvation that he had appointed, whereby his justice was satisfied, his law fulfilled, his mercy reigned, his grace triumphed, all his perfections harmonized, the sinner was saved, and God in Christ glorified."

The king looked astonished, the queen shed tears ; Rochester, after some very severe reflections upon the chaplain, gravely moved that his majesty would be pleased to send the chaplain into the kitchen to turn cook, and that he would make this cook his chaplain. Now, by way of conclusion to this historical fact, I will only remark that this same cook is a true specimen of what the Scottish peasantry are at this present day ; few of them learn more at school than to read the bible and write their own name, but the beautiful and sublime language in which the narrative is conveyed, the true and concise descriptions of men and matter, etc., make those whose bible was their school-book, and who make it their companion by the way, to be wiser than their teachers. Hence, in the heather hills among the sheepards, and in the lowlands among the ploughmen of Scotland, you will find thousands deeply read in science and language. They are profound engineers, scientific gardeners and botanists, learned physicians, surgeons, and anatomists, independent and conscientious preachers of righteousness, and by them the gospel is preached to the poor.

Now I challenge all the popes, from the days of Miss Pope Joan the first down to the present incumbent, to produce as many bibles in any country under the sun, of the same dimensions, as are to be found in Scotland. It is therefore a fair inference, that the bible alone makes them to differ from the restless Frenchman, the ferocious Spaniard, the German serf, the Russian boor, and other white slaves in Europe.—*American Paper.*

As it sometimes rains when the sun shines, so there may be joy in a saint's heart when there are tears in his eyes.

Let us familiarize death by meditations, and sweeten it by preparation.

## Varietie.

**"UNCLE TOM" IN RUSSIA.**—This celebrated work is obtaining great success in the dominions of the Czar, and the police do not interfere with it. Although no formal authorization has been given to admit the work, yet it is not interdicted. At first, when only a few copies had arrived, they were passed about with the utmost regularity from one part of the city to the other, the period assigned for each reader being fixed at two hours, and no longer. Hence, the aristocracy of Moscow actually read the work bit by bit, as they could best manage to obtain it. At present, thousands of copies in French are in circulation both here and at St. Petersburg. A translation into Russian by an eminent writer is about to appear by the authorization of the government.

**THE ORDNANCE SURVEY.**—About 1300 persons are at present employed on the ordnance survey. They have now completed maps of several large towns in England, on a scale of 60 inches to the mile. Maps on a scale of six inches to the mile of several Scotch counties are preparing, as well as one-inch maps of Ireland and Scotland.

**INSANITY AMONG THE WORKING CLASSES.**—An official report recently published states that insanity has lately increased to such an extent amongst the working classes, that none but those whose duties bring them in contact with the sufferers can form an idea of its fearful spread. There are now no less than 494 chargeable to the parish of Marylebone. In St. Pancras, also, insanity prevails to an unusual amount.

**OBELISK IN WHITECHAPEL.**—The great obelisk exhibited at the Crystal Palace in 1851, has been purchased by the inhabitants of Whitechapel, and is now being erected in the centre of the hay-market.

**HAMPSHIRE HOG.**—A real Hampshire hog has lately been killed by a person at Southampton, which, although scarcely two years old, weighed 35 score. It had been fed principally on barley-meal.

**THE SWIFT.**—The *Swift* has recently brought home a skeleton, found in Peru, supposed to have been interred for centuries, with a variety of native domestic and other articles. They will be sent to the British Museum.

**A RAT'S NEST.**—A lady at Malvern, on returning home after a three months' absence, noticed that her pianoforte was out of condition, and sent for a tuner, who discovered that a rat had taken up his quarters in the interior, where he had constructed a commodious nest with the coverings of the hammers, portions of silk, etc.

**TOBACCO IN ALGERIA.**—The cultivation of tobacco in this French colony has proved most successful. In 1851 only 264,912 kilogrammes were produced; while in 1852 the quantity had risen to 735,199 kilogrammes.

**RAILWAY TRAVELLING.**—It has been ascertained that 200,000 people daily arrive at and quit London by rail. The North-Western company runs 300 trains per day, and employs 11,000 servants.

**CURIOS BIBLES.**—There is now, in a state of good preservation at Göttingen, a Bible written on palm leaves, containing 5376 leaves. Another copy of the same material is at Copenhagen. There were also in Sir Hans Sloane's collection more than twenty manuscripts, in various languages, on the same material.

**A PLETHORA OF HOUSEKEEPERS.**—A lady who lately advertised in the *Times* for a housekeeper, received in the course of four posts upwards of 2000 replies!

**DEPTH OF THE OCEAN.**—Captain Denham, R.N., now prosecuting a scientific voyage, recently read a paper at the Royal Society, in which the deepest sounding of the ocean ever made was recorded. On the passage from Rio de Janeiro to the Cape of Good Hope, in 36° 49' south latitude, and 37° 6' west longitude, on a calm day, the ocean was ascertained to be 7706 fathoms deep, or 7.7 geographical miles. The weight of the superincumbent water was so excessive, that a bottle of fresh water being lowered to a great depth in the sea, the pressure drove in the cork, and expelled the contents, the sea water taking the place of the fresh.

**ARCTIC SUCCOURS.**—Her majesty's sloop *Rattlesnake* has recently been fitted at Sheerness for the conveyance of provisions and stores to the Arctic regions for the relief of the missing squadrons. Besides the supplies for her own crew for a period of three years, she takes out 17,000 lbs. of Hogarth and Co.'s preserved meats, soups, etc., 15,000 lbs. of preserved vegetables, 2000 lbs. of pickles, 3000 lbs. of cranberries, 1000 lbs. of julienne, and an abundant stock of other anti-scorbutics, together with a large quantity of live stock and poultry for the comfort of the ship's company. The *Rattlesnake* is to proceed as far north as Barrow Point, where she will house in and remain for the winter.

**STEPS TOWARDS A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE.**—Some French savans have resolved to assemble in Paris, in the course of the present month, a congress of philologists from the different countries of Europe, to discuss questions relative to different languages, and to prepare the way for establishing, if possible, a universal alphabet, as the first steps towards the creation of a universal language. The presence of foreign linguists is requested.

**THE WELLINGTON FUNERAL CAR.**—This superb object is being completed under the directions of Messrs. Banting. It required to be wholly refitted, in order to be preserved; and its final resting-place is to be at the Tower of London, among the other national relics, where, doubtless, in due time, some very amusing stories will be told of it by our friend the "beef-eater." Its appropriation was decided by the Lord Chamberlain.

**AN EYE TO "THE MAIN CHANCE."**—A young stock-broker having married an old widow with 100,000/., says it wasn't his wife's face that attracted him so much as the figure.

**ECONOMY OF LABOUR.**—If all the labour of the British empire were performed by hand, it would require the active exertion of every full-grown man in the world.

**THE DUKE AND APOLLYON.**—Some years since, the Duke was sitting at his library table, when the door opened, and, without any announcement, in stalked a figure of singularly ill omen. "Who are you?" asked the Duke, in his short, dry manner, looking up without the least change of countenance upon the intruder. "I am Apollyon." "What want?" "I am sent to kill you." "Kill me—very odd." "I am Apollyon, and I must put you to death." "Bliged to do it today?" "I am not told the day or the hour, but I must do my mission." "Very inconvenient—very busy—great many letters to write—call again, and write me word—I'll be ready for you." And the Duke went on with his correspondence. The maniac, appalled probably by the stern, immovable old man, backed out of the room, and in half an hour was safe in Bedlam.—*New Quarterly Review*.